Participative Patient Decision Making Through Interactive Tutorial

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INTRODUCTION

In this day of increased consumer knowledge and individual responsibility, health professionals are challenged to assist patients in becoming active participants in their health decisions. Health care professionals are encouraged to offer medical information to clients to broaden their perspective of treatment therapies. Providing adequate information to make informed decisions conveys respect and caring.[1]

The intensity of time constraints and staff demands have encouraged health care professionals to develop computer-based tools to help patients make informed decisions. Standardization by computer reduces the risk of serious consequences from poor communication between patient and health care providers. [1]

Information technology has a wide range of applications for persons with chronic illnesses. Interactive computer programs are providing information for participants on chronic diseases, medications and prevention. Interactive tutorials for participative decision making are effective and efficient methods to promote self-care and offer multiple advantages to the teacher and learner.

Enhanced patient satisfaction, increased consumer competence, and improved patient outcomes are possible results from shared responsibility and power in the health care relationship.[2] Patient participation in chronic illness management requires education and control of treatment therapies. Improved outcomes for patients who participate in their treatment plans are supported by research. [3,4]

METHODOLOGY

The content was identified for mandatory knowledge based on research and health care provider perspective. The programs were designed considering user interface and audience analysis of the "typical patient" with a chronic disease process. Programs were designed to provide a comfortable non-threatening environment. The flexibility and design accommodate varied learning needs and styles by use of graphics and text. The use of color, navigational system and artwork was designed to be appropriate for the identified audience.

The programs were developed using the MS-DOS with Windows© 3.1 architecture. Asymetrix Toolbook© 3.0, an object-oriented hypermedia program, is the authoring system. The interactive program developed with Toolbook© can be easily used through the inclusion of runtime files without requiring purchase of the entire software package.

Interactive computer programs were developed incorporating participative decision making for (1) hypertensive clients and (2) clients with diabetes considering insulin pump therapy. Modifications were made for each module developed based on audience analysis of needs.

References

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